amount of money was illegally transferred through him by Shri Harshad Mehta.

(d) to (f) Investigation conducted so far has not yielded any specific evidence to prove these allegations.

States' Demand for Moratorium on Debt Repayment

3712. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Finance Ministry rejected the demand of three year moratorium on debt repayment and rescheduling of loans in Punjab, Assam and Jammu & Kashmir; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons for the Finance Ministry not acceding to the demands of the States for repayment of moratorium?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) and (b) The requests of the State Governments in question have not been agreed to by the Central Government in view of its financial constraints. The resources of the Central Government take into account repayment of loans and to the extent they are reduced, the ability of the Centre to provide plan assistance to States will also get reduced.

Courses Conducted by UTI

3713. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the UTI Institute of Capital Markets regularly conducts short-term residential programme for professional development at an exorbitant fee;

(b) what is the number of courses conducted annually and the amount of fee collected;

(c) whether the programmes are subsidised for the participants from the public sector and other Government sponsored institutions;

(d) whether Government are planning to offer the expertise of the UTI Institute of Capital Markets for investors awareness at no-profit-no-loss basis; and

(e) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. ABRAR AHMED): (a) The Unit Trust of India Institute of Capital Markets conducts short-term programmes for professional developments. The fee charged for the programmes is not exorbitant as it covers only the variable expenses. The fixed and capital expenses are subsidised by UTI.

(b) The number of courses conducted during the years 1991-92 and 1992-93 was 31 and 34 respectively. The fee collected during years 1991-92 and 1992-93 amounted to Rs. 40.82 lakhs and Rs. 66.51 lakhs respectively.

(c) The present fee structure already has an element of subsidy which is met from the dividend income from investment of the corpus fund of Rs. 5 crores provided by the UTI.

(d) and (e) At present, there is no such proposal.

Steps to Check Trade Deficit

3714. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Trade deficit, external debt and the debt-servicing ratio has sharply increased during 1992-93 over the year 1991-92;

(b) what are the comparative data for the past three years;

(c) whether the above indicators are projected to rise further during 1993-94; and

(d) if so, what strategy has been drawn to bring these under control?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. ABRAR AHMED): (a) and (b) Trade deficit, external debt and debt servicing ratio for the years 1990-91 to 1992-93 are given below:

	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93
Trade deficit (DGCI&S) (US $ million)	5.93	1.61	3.30
Year-end non-defence external debt (revised classification) US $ million	63.37	67.56	70.35
Debt service ratio (non-defence debt service payments as per cent of current receipts)	25.8	25.1	25.6

(c) and (d) The trade deficit is expected to decline in 1993-94 from the level of 1992-93. The growth in external debt is expected to decline in 1993-94 with an expected decline in current account deficit. The debt service ratio has stabilised and is not expected to rise in 1993-94.

Financial Assistance to States for Flood Relief Measures

3715. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to amend the rules provided under the Ninth Finance Commission for financial assistance to States for flood relief measures; and

(b) if so, by when and if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Calamity Relief Fund was set up on the recommendations of the Ninth Finance Commission with effect from 1-4-1990 and will remain in force upto 1994-95. One of the terms of reference of Tenth Finance Commission is to review the present Scheme of Calamity Relief Fund and to make appropriate recommendations thereon. Therefore the question of amending the rules does not arise.

Merger of New Bank of India with Punjab National Bank

3716. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to merge New Bank of India with Punjab National Bank;

(b) if so, what are the factors that have weighed with Government to merge these two banks;

(c) what are other proposals in this regard, under Government's consideration; and

(d) what is the criteria likely to be followed in the cases of merger of banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. ABRAR AHMED): (a) to (d) A proposal for merger of one nationalised bank with another nationalised bank is under consideration. It will not be in public interest to disclose the details of the proposal at this stage.

Government have also received a proposal from the State Bank of India for the merger of its seven Associate Banks into a single Associate Bank. Government have solicited the views of Reserve Bank of India on the proposal.